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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: IRAN: EU DIPLOMATS TO ATTEND AHMADINEJAD
INAUGURATION

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Kathleen H. Allegrone, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C/NF) European Union members will send low-ranking diplomats to the first of two inauguration ceremonies for Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, but they will not inform the Iranians of their plans, according to French MFA Acting Middle East Director (Assistant-Secretary equivalent) Jean-Christophe Paucele. If the Iranians find out beforehand that the EU will not send Ambassador-level representation, Paucele told poloff early July 31, then they may rescind the invitations to the August 3 event, as they did in similar circumstances prior to former President Khatami's inauguration in 1997. "It's hard to keep a secret when 27 nations are involved," Paucele noted, "but we are trying." Only the Swedish EU Presidency will be represented by an Ambassador, Paucele said.

¶2. (C/NF) All EU members will, however, send their Ambassadors to the August 5 inauguration ceremony in the Iranian Parliament. Paucele adopted a defensive tone when explaining this decision, which he said was finalized in Brussels the morning of July 31. He admitted this issue had generated tense and fractious debate among European foreign ministers. "We are caught between two conflicting objectives," Paucele explained. "On the one hand, we want to communicate that we do not approve of this illegitimate election. On the other hand, we need to be realistic: the power is in the hands of Khomeini and Ahmadinejad, including the nuclear file, and we must negotiate with those in power. You are in the same position." Paucele insisted that the EU will continue to respect what he described as "the Durban red lines." "We will walk right out if Ahmadinejad denies the Holocaust or declares that his regime will destroy Israel." (NOTE: Paucele admitted that since non-Muslims had never before received an invitation to the inauguration ceremony presided over by the Supreme Leader, EU diplomats in Tehran have never entered the building where the event will take place, and so they are not sure how they will stage their walk-out, logistically, should they need to do so. They are worried that the doors may be locked. END NOTE.) Paucele also reported that the German Ambassador will return from his vacation on August 4 to ensure that he will miss the first ceremony and attend the second one along with his EU counterparts. The British Ambassador will attend as well, even without credentials. "The Iranians are desperate for recognition and so they have disregarded their usual devotion to protocol -- and their anti-British vitriol -- on this occasion."

¶3. (C/NF) Paucele said that the case of detained French citizen Clothilde Reiss has also influenced the EU decision to attend the inauguration ceremonies. "We think she may be released soon, and we don't want to create another irritant," Paucele said. "There are enough already." He reported that the French have reason to believe Reiss may form part of a group of detainees likely to be released on the August 7

anniversary of Imam Mahdi. Paucelle noted that a letter released July 29 by Ahmadinejad supported the idea of granting clemency to post-election protesters during Mahdi celebrations. "The Iranians will need to take face-saving measures, and so she will likely transfer to house arrest or some other status," Paucelle said. He added that, of course, she may not be released at all next week, but the French remain optimistic that she will soon be out of prison.

PEKALA